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De Courcey was of colour white, mighty large bones and sinews, tall, and broad in proportion of body, so that his strength was thought to exceed all others; in boldness incomparable, and a warrior even from his youth.

The earl, after this, attempted fifteen times to cross the seas to Ireland, but was always put back by contrary winds; whereupon he altered his resolution, and went to France, where he died, about the year 1210.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

THE LISTENER, NO. I.

Semper ego auditor—

WALLS, they say, have ears—so they should—how many notable discoveries would otherwise be lost to the world—how much good would be unknown, how much wickedness undetected, were it not for these silent informers? How little would the ruffian and debauchee be restrained from their secret practices, how little compunction would they feel on committing them, were not the voice within seconded by the ear without. The science, or to speak more philosophically, the mystery of listening, has not been sufficiently attended to; on the contrary, instead of being praised and admired, it is the subject of universal obloquy. I might myself have been carried away by the same prejudices against it as affect the multitude, had I not considered that every great improvement has had to struggle against ignorance and error; and even in this enlightened age I would hardly venture to stem the torrent of popular opinion that is directed against it, did I not see that truth is always ultimately triumphant; that the martyr of to-day will be the saint of to-morrow. Galileo was thrown into prison for venturing to assert the motion of the earth: and friar Bacon was strongly suspected of dealing with the devil. Not to multiply instances, the first inventor of a speaking automaton was persecuted as a sorcerer: hence I infer, that if a signal improvement in the art of speaking met with such an ungrateful reception, it is not to be wondered at, that the first refiner of the art of hearing should have equal

obstacles to obstruct his progress. But great is truth, and it will prevail. Although at present the listener is hated, shunned, and kicked out of company, the time, I trust, is not far distant, when undeserved reproach will be overpaid with well-earned admiration, and the author of the art will receive the reward of his present labours and risques. Then perhaps I will appear immortalized in brass, an everlasting monument of the progress of public opinion, standing on tip-toe, the right hand open, and drawn close to the cheek, to break the current of air that might otherwise disturb the sensibility of the auditory nerve; the left reverted to repress intruders; the neck stretched forward, the eye fixed, the mouth half open, the head inclined a little to one side; one ear turned downwards to receive the lowly creeping whisper, the other raised to catch the flying tale; and beneath, in letters of gold,

Ille ego qui primum—

Besides the advantages accruing to the public from the art of listening, those resulting to the possessor of such an invaluable secret are not few. It gives him an insight into human nature, exhibiting it in a view before unthought on. Men, as they are generally studied, are like objects seen through a fog, which never appear in their true form or colours. The listener penetrates the veil, he gets behind the scenes, and sees them undressed, unpainted, and unadorned. It must be confessed, that many of these advantages are owing to the secrecy with which this faculty is employed: a listener, when known, ceases to be a listener; yet such is the wise regulation of Providence to reduce mankind to a level, by balancing good qualities with defects, that what is gained on one side, is lost on the other. It appears so particularly in the present instance. Could a listener keep his own secrets, he would rise to an undisputed superiority over the rest of his fellow-creatures; hearing all, and saying nothing, he would be the privy-counsellor to all mankind, and regulate the world at his pleasure. To prevent this, and keep the balance even, it is remarkable, that whenever nature has braced the ear so highly

that it is sensible to the least agitation of the surrounding air, capable of vibrating to the lowest whisper, and conveying it full and perfect to the brain, she has, on the other side, so completely relaxed the muscles of the tongue, that it ceases to be obedient to the will. The action of the drum of the ear produces a corresponding motion in the tongue, so that every sound that enters through the former aperture is immediately emitted through the latter. Sometimes she does not stop here, but as the bell often continues to tinkle when the hand that set it in motion has ceased to pull, so the tongue often says more than what has been communicated to it through the ear. In confirmation of this theory, Horace (who, by the bye, in joining the common-place cry against this noble science, has not adhered to his usual liberality of sentiment) has the following line

Percontatorem fagito, nam garrulus idem est.

Having said so much of the art, it is now time to state my reasons for appearing before the public. For the better understanding of these, I shall first say a few words of myself, my origin, and the means by which I became an adept. In speaking of myself, I shall not recur to my ancestors, nor lay any stress on what does not immediately concern myself; though, were I inclined to imitate the example of most biographers, I might dwell with no small degree of pride and self-complacency on their merits; the family of Dulman, from which I trace my descent, being well known to have been amongst the oldest and most respectable in the kingdom, not only claiming kindred with most of the peerage, both spiritual and temporal, but having the honour, as I have been repeatedly assured, of not being very distantly allied to majesty itself. From this, however, I assume no consequence, and shall therefore dwell no longer on it, but proceed to my main subject.

Most great men trace the origin of their future fame from their infancy, seeming to think that as the infant is but the man in embryo, so the intelligence that produces such fruit when mature, may be perceptible in the bud. Several prognostications of my future disposition, shewed themselves even

before my birth. To pass over many, which I have reason to suspect were *ex post facto* omens, my mother, when in her pregnancy, had a most unaccountable longing for a dish of pigs' ears, and has told me more than once, that a short time before she lay in, she dreamt that she was delivered of a hearing-trumpet. When in my swaddling cloaths I could never bear to have my head covered, and to this singularity of having the organs of hearing constantly exposed, I attribute in a great degree the strength of nerve and length of muscular substance that has given them such extraordinary sensibility. The latter of these was so remarkable, that at school, I went by no other name than Luggs. When able to take care of myself, my sole amusement abroad was riding a donkey, and at home, lying with my ear close to one end of a beam of timber, listening to the sound produced by a nail with which one of my playfellows scratched the other. As I advanced in years, I was remarkable for nothing but an impenetrable stupidity and aversion to book-learning. My parents attributed this to a want of intellect, and I have often overheard them whispering to each other, that I was born to be a perfect dunce. Little did they know, that at the time when my countenance indicated the most confirmed stolidity, all my faculties were at work within. While I stood in a corner, apparently listless, gaping at the wall, or sucking my finger, my ear was open to every murmur that circulated, and when they were vainly endeavouring to fix my eyes on my horn-book, they little thought that I was then most sedulously storing my mind with ideas from another sense.

Accident has given a bent to the studies of the greatest men; it was so with me. My first inducement to attend to Latin and Greek, was reading the fable of Midas. The long ears, the barber, the ditch, the whispering of the reeds, delighted me. It was the same with the Roman history. I drudged through it without pleasure till I came to the sons of Brutus, who were flogged to death by their father. Yet it was not they that excited my interest. The father's resolution, or the sons' sufferings, would never have raised either my admiration or pity. Vindicius was

my hero, His sinking into the inner room, overhearing the plans of the conspirators, and obtaining liberty and honour by the discovery, decided me in his favour. But of all the remarkable men of antiquity, Dionysius of Sicily was my favourite. His mode of detecting conspiracies was a masterpiece of ingenuity. Often have I determined to take a voyage into Sicily, where I understand that precious morsel of antiquity still exists, to examine his ear, and take a model of it for my own use. Nay, I long had thoughts of constructing one of the same form at home, and would have attempted it, had I not reflected on the difficulty of bringing those into it from whom I wished to make discoveries. However, I have it in contemplation to make a portable ear on the same principles. I design to construct it in the form of a lady's parasol, which, by collecting the whispers of those beneath into a focus at the top, may be conveyed to the listener, when placed at a proper distance. What pleasure shall I not feel in overhearing the unreserved tattle of a couple of female gossips, who are unburdening themselves to one another as they go along the public walks, little suspecting that every word is noted down by me as I walk along gravely and silently on the other side of the street. I must request the reader to keep what I have now said a secret, as, if known, the ladies, from whom I expect to collect the greatest part of my information, may take the alarm, throw aside this fashionable appendage to their summer walks, and thus destroy my project in embryo. In the mean time I have not been idle in seizing every opportunity that presented itself, of investigating the private history of my neighbours, and have already laid up a stock of secret history that will one day surprize the world.

In the course of my studies, though I have no reason to find fault with my progress, I have not been without my sufferings and disappointments. At the very outset I was nearly discouraged from proceeding, by the following unlucky accident: I was extremely curious to overhear a conversation between a lady, into whose family I had wormed

myself in the character of a toad-eater, and her physician. I therefore placed myself in a small closet, where I lay safe from discovery. Many close questions were put, and I was on the point of making a notable discovery in medicine, when an unlucky sneeze that I could not repress broke all my measures. The lady instantly started up. The physician burst into the closet, and though I appeared fast asleep, and snored most naturally, it would not do. I was taken by the nose, led down stairs to the great hall, and handed over to the discipline of the servants, whom the cries of their mistress on finding a stranger in her bed-chamber, had collected. By them I was conducted in procession to the stable yard, and being placed under the pump, received an ablution that would have roused Morpheus himself from his slumbers in the middle of December. At another time I was feasting myself on a love scene, which I overheard through a partition. I listened in rapture, and watched in silent expectation to detect the parties, who, as far as I could collect from the words I caught, could not have been on terms of closer intimacy; how great was my disappointment, when I found it to be an elderly maiden lady; who was diverting her solitude by reading aloud, or rather acting to herself a chapter in one of Lewis's romances. At a country inn where I once stopped for the night, I overheard a stranger in the next apartment speaking to himself in the most energetic manner. My curiosity had been already excited by what I had heard of him from the house-maid; for it is my constant rule to collect all the previous information in my power, as a clue to my solitary investigations. I could hear him call upon God; curse his own destiny; exclaim against the world, himself, and heaven. I began to be alarmed; at length the following expressions caught my ear—"It is enough, my liberty is in my own hands: a single effort releases me from a life of misery—shall I hesitate to break my shackles—no—this moment—" I could no longer restrain myself, but burst into the room, and found that the supposed suicide was an itinerant preacher, who was rehearsing a sermon that

he was to preach *extempore* on the following evening. These, and other similar checks, did not damp me; the spirit of inquisitiveness was rather incited by them; they were useful lessons, which have not a little tended to make me complete master of the art.

And now for my reasons—The first and most urgent is, to rid myself of a burden too weighty for me. This I ought to conceal; but it is impossible for one who is always hearing truths, not to be sometimes guilty of telling them. If the redundancies of my brain be of equal use to the public with the laborious scrapings of others, I see no reason why they should be dissatisfied. If the effect be good, they need not quarrel at the cause that produces it. Another reason is this; by such a copious and speedy discharge of the contents of my brain, a vacuity will be occasioned, which, if we may judge of the intellectual by the corporeal part of our frame, excites very painful sensations, and demands an extraordinary supply. A man is never so hungry as after sea-sickness. When therefore I lay my stores before the public, I intend to invite those affected with the *cacoethes loquendi*, to make me the depository of their surplus of intelligence, so that filling up on one side what pours out at the other, a constant supply may be maintained. It will be an equitable account, a sort of banking business, now so much in fashion, where the bills coming in as the notes issue out, supply a constant paper currency, and prevent the danger of a stoppage. Or, to speak philosophically, it may be considered as a Galvanic circuit, in which a hidden subtle fluid produced from vitriol and water, acid and insipidity, entering in through the zinc at one side, and going out through the copper at the other, produces an incessant flow, which though invisible and imperceptible, when suffered to perform its round undisturbed, acts instantly on him who ventures to interrupt its progress. Galvanism; we are told, cannot raise the dead to life, nor restore a lost eye, but is a sovereign remedy for tooth-aches and rheumatisms*. The art of Listening is not

likely to be brought to such an *experimentum crucis*. One would be unwilling to stifle a reputation, as you would hang up a dog, to see if it could be whispered into re-existence, or to extinguish a brilliant spark of genius, in the hope of lighting it up again by this new-invented Gas. But in those mental diseases which are troublesome, though not fatal, those twitches of conscience hitherto deemed incurable, except by rooting out the part affected like a rotten tooth; those internal chronics that lie dormant in the sunshine of wealth and pleasure, and are brought on by the wintry blasts of adversity; in such cases it will no doubt be pleasing to all, to hear of a new, approved, and infallible specific, which can be used without pain, loss of time, or hindrance of business.

All this, I think, will be the happy effect of an art so long known, yet hitherto so little observed. In order to bring it into the notice it deserves, I propose soon to publish a hand-bill or advertisement, conformably with the practice of my brother experimental philosophers on the body corporate, stating "that whereas, Daniel Dulman, D. N. I. A. L. (Discoverer of the Noble and Inscrutable Art of Listening, has brought this science to such a state of perfection, as to render it applicable to the cure of all complaints incident to the human understanding, he is ready to give advice and relief to every applicant who will favour him with the state of their case, or visit him, at his apartments, No. 5, Botany Bay, Hercules-street, three doors from the corner, up two pair of stairs, backwards; the above situation having been chosen, after minute examination of all parts of the town, for its health, cleanliness, and retirement. The utmost honour and secrecy observed. N. B. The Doctor's name is engraved in large capitals on a pewter-plate on the hall door. Letters (post paid) with the patient's state of mind, age, circumstances, &c. will be punctually attended to." It is also my intention to publish monthly lectures on the science itself, accompanied with extraordinary cases, experiments, &c. for the gratification of the curious. As pecuniary profit is not my object, I shall transmit these

* Vide the Medical Reports of the Magazine.

through the Belfast Magazine, and I doubt not but they will contribute to augment, to a very high degree, the reputation which that publication has already so deservedly attained.

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

ALTHOUGH you have been so unreasonably worried for inserting an account of Theophilus Lindsey, as if it were criminal to suppose a man may conscientiously separate from the church in which he was educated, and as if the old exploded doctrine of the crime of schism were to be revived in this quarter, although generally exploded in the enlightened parts of the empire, I hope you are not deterred from publishing such interesting facts respecting other dissenters, as may have a tendency to convey useful instruction. I trust your pages will always be open to whatever will have a tendency to liberalize the public mind.

At a late public dinner of the subscribers to the Unitarian fund in London, William Frend, M.A. the well known mathematician and astronomer, and author of that amusing and instructive periodical work, "Evening Amusements, or the Beauty of the Heavens Displayed," in which several striking appearances to be observed in the evenings of the succeeding year, are described; a learned man himself, took that opportunity of making some observations on the great and obvious difference between ignorance and want of learning. "A man might not be a scholar and yet a well informed man; as he might not be a well informed man, though a scholar. To teach religion requires only a knowledge of it, which a man may have without classical learning. To be able to tell the name of a candlestick in ten different languages does not carry a man a whit towards the right understanding of the New Testament." He defined the true province of learning, and described its usefulness within its legitimate boundaries. Fanaticism is the great enemy, from which common sense is a more effectual preservative than learning. If you are not tired with sound sense

though from the lips of a non-conformist, I recommend you to insert the following letter written by the late Robert Robinson of Cambridge, a noted baptist preacher, well known and highly respected by many at that University—and which has lately appeared in an edition of his works. He was a man of undoubted piety, and though he appears to treat this subject with a certain air of jocularity, at which some may be offended, yet I think there is much sound sense in the letter. He shows himself a man usefully employed. I do not expect the full and useful occupation of his time throughout the day made his sermon less instructive in the evening. The Baptists do not consider that secular employment unfits for the ministerial office, and consequently many of their preachers are shopkeepers and persons in mechanical employments. I think I see a smile on the countenance of many of your readers; but before they are too hasty in their censures, it may be well for them to know that Robert Robinson was a well informed man, wrote much in defence of the christian religion, was free from fanaticism, no canter, and was highly respected by many members of the University, among whom he lived, as well as by others who differed widely in opinion from him. It is happy for mankind to learn to bear with diversity of opinion, and to open their hearts to look favourably on the merits of those, whose sentiments and theirs may be widely different. N.

TO HENRY KEENE, ESQ. WALWORTH:

Chesterton, May 26, 1784

OLD FRIEND,

You love I should write folios: that depends upon circumstances, and if the thunder-storm lasts, it will be so; but what a sad thing it is to be forced to write, when one has nothing to say? Well, you shall have an apology for not writing,—that is, a diary of one day.

Rose at three o'clock—crawled into the library—and met one who said, "Yet a little while is the light with you: walk while ye have the light—the night cometh, when no man can work—my father worketh hitherto,